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The Federal Civil Service as a Career. A Manual for Applicants for Positions and Those in the Civil Service of the Nation.
By EL BIE K. FOLTZ. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons,
1909. Pp. vi, 250. \$1.50 net.)

Mr. Foltz has entered a field where there has long been need for a thorough work, and has produced a book of considerable general interest and of decided value to the special class for whose use it is primarily intended. Although it is far from being final, and although it contains a considerable number of defects this book at least affords a basis for the development of an authoritative treatment of the subject.

In his earlier chapters Foltz discusses the methods and system of organization employed by the national government. He then describes the "merit system" and explains carefully the processes of preparation, examination, and appointment in the service. He further considers the possibilities and opportunities of the civil appointee, and in closing chapters he speaks of the broader questions relating to government work as a career. The author is at his best in his description and analysis of detail. He carefully outlines the organization of the force of employees and officials and the division of places among the different grades of the classified service. He is also decidedly satisfactory in his mode of dealing with examinations, giving specimen questions and clearly stating what is expected of candidates. His description of such practices as those relating to "transfer," "reinstatement" and the like, ought to be very useful to every government officer, and condenses much valuable matter in convenient form.

Mr. Foltz should receive a due measure of praise for frank recognition and criticism of some evils of organization in public life. Thus in speaking of the practice whereby sundry higher officials make use of government servants for their personal ends, exacting of them work which has no relation to their regular duties, he does not hesitate to state the facts, though cautiously; while in discussing the question of political activity he distinctly takes the rigid or civil service point of view. So, too, in indicating the actual working of the merit system, the author sharply comments upon the inequality of duty and salary which is

the present "source of disaffection and complaint among employes." Such criticisms are not conveyed in an obnoxious or offensive way but with the tone of one who recognizes an evil close to himself and desires to see it corrected for the good of all concerned.

Mr. Foltz is seen in his least favorable light when he emerges from his familiar surroundings and attempts to take a broader view of the service as a whole. Here he is platitudinous and tiresome as well as narrow in his views and occasionally biased. Tendencies to homiletical writing are seen in the frequent commonplace or trite twaddle used to introduce a chapter as: "Preparation is the foundation of success. It is the weapon that enables man to lay hold upon success." Similar in character is the naive advice on how to succeed, as: "Self-advertisement is now indicated. His [the candidate's] educational attainments will entitle him to membership in a good club where he should . . . make friends." Of equally low grade is the chapter on the Civil Service as a Stepping Stone, where the possibilities of using the government service as a way of getting something better are discussed. The author's provincialism is also seen in what he has to say of the "college graduate in public life," where he enforces the idea that the "college man . . . must above all be practical. . . . Latin and Greek as such have no place in our national life." In fact all through the volume on its "higher side," Mr. Foltz falls short. He gives no adequate account of the newer fields of public service and how to reach them as e. g., the consular service; and his conception of the real meaning and duty of public life is vague. He should have called his book merely *The Federal Civil Service: A Manual*, omitting the discussion of the Civil Service as a Career. Yet the book is useful and need not be despised.

H. PARKER WILLIS.

Washington, D. C.